

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

S E C R E T STATE 233410

NODIS

WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI

FOLLOWING REPEAT NICOSIA 2559 ACTION SECSTATE SEP 28

QUOTE S E C R E T NICOSIA 2559

NODIS

NOFORN

DEPT PASS AT DISCRETION ANKARA AND ATHENS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PGOV, CY

SUBJ: FONMIN CHRISTOPHIDES DISCUSSES CYPRUS POLITICAL PROSPECTS

REF: USUN 3062

SUMMARY: GOC FONMIN CHRISTOPHIDES BELIEVES USG WAS FAIR
AND CONSTRUCTIVE, WITHIN ITS OWN POLICY LIGHTS, IN UNSC

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CYPRUS DEBATE. HE PARTICULARLY APPRECIATES THE RELATION-
SHIP HE DEVELOPED WITH AMB LEONARD. CHRISTOPHIDES CONTINUES
TO REGARD THE PROSPECTIVE COMBINATION OF KYPRIANOU
AND ARCHBISHOP CHRYSOSTOMOS AS DREADFUL FOR THE
FUTURE OF GREEK CYPRUS. HE, OTHER SENIOR MINISTERS (MINFIN
PATSIDES PRIMARY AMONG THEM) AND MEMBERS OF THE
ESTABLISHMENT ARE WORKING TO BLOCK KYPRIANOU'S REELECTION

IN FEBRUARY. THEY ARE MANEUVERING FOR EITHER PATSALIDES OR PASCALIDES AS AN ABOVE-PARTY CANDIDATE TO UNIFY THE CENTER AND RIGHT. CHRISTOPHIDES HAS CONVEYED THE VIEWS OF THIS GROUP TO ATHENS WHERE GOG OFFICIALS HAVE CONFIRMED GREECE'S OPPOSITION TO EMERGENCE OF A COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED GOVERNMENT IN CYPRUS. CHRISTOPHIDES ASKS THAT USG SUPPORT THIS BY MAKING ITS CONCERNS KNOWN TO THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOG. END SUMMARY.

1. I HAD A LONG, PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL CONVERSATION WITH CYPRUS FONMIN CHRISTOPHIDES SEPT 26.

2. I ASKED CHRISTOPHIDES HOW HE VIEWED THE OUTCOME OF UNSC DEBATE ON CYPRUS. HE REPLIED THAT DEBATE HAD BEEN EXTENDED, DIFFICULT AND TIRING, BUT HE WAS PLEASED WITH THE RESULT AND FELT RESOLUTION HAD ENHANCED HIS POSITION HERE. HE CONSIDERED THAT GIVEN ITS POLICY APPROACH, WITH WHICH HE COULD NOT WHOLLY AGREE, USG HAD BEEN FAIR. HE WAS PARTICULARLY APPRECIATIVE OF THE RELATIONSHIP WHICH HE HAD DEVELOPED WITH AMBASSADOR LEONARD, WHOSE INVOLVEMENT AT CRUCIAL POINTS HAD BEEN MOST HELPFUL.

3. CHRISTOPHIDES REFERRED TO HIS CONCLUDING TALK WITH LEONARD (REFTEL). HE NOTED THAT AS WE HAD UNDOUBTEDLY BEEN INFORMED, LEONARD HAD URGED THAT GOC IMPROVE ITS
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CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSAL. WHILE APPRECIATIVE OF THE SPIRIT IN WHICH THIS SUGGESTION HAD BEEN MADE, I.E. REFLECTING USG'S CONTINUING INTEREST IN BEING HELPFUL, CHRISTOPHIDES SAID HE HAD BEEN OBLIGED TO REPLY THAT A REVISED GREEK CYPRIOT CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION IS RULED OUT IN THE ABSENCE OF A TURKISH RESPONSE TO GREEK CYPRIOT TERRITORIAL PROPOSAL (MAP).

4. TURNING TO THE GREEK CYPRIOT POLITICAL SCENE AND PROSPECTS IN THE FEBRUARY ELECTIONS, CHRISTOPHIDES REITERATED HIS COMPELLING DISTASTE FOR KYPRIANOU. THE COMBINATION OF KYPRIANOU AND ARCHBISHOP CHRYSOSTOMOS WOULD BE DREADFUL FOR GREEK CYPRUS. KYPRIANOU, HE FEELS, IS NOT CONCERNED WITH ANYTHING EXCEPT ELECTION, IS ALMOST WHOLLY DEPENDENT ON THE SUPPORT HE CAN GET FROM THE COMMUNISTS (AKEL), AND WILL NOT GIVE THAT UP FOR AN UNCERTAIN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE RIGHT, AND IS THUS SUBJECT TO AKEL CONTROL. CHRISTOPHIDES CITED EXAMPLES SUCH AS WAVE OF PROMOTIONS OF AKEL MEMBERS TO SENIOR LEVELS OF GOC BUREAUCRACY.

5. THUS, THE FONMIN STRESSED, HE WILL CONTINUE TO DO

EVERYTHING IN HIS POWER TO BLOCK KYPRIANOU. HE CITED THE OTHER SENIOR MINISTERS WHO, HE SAID, FEEL THE SAME WAY: MINFIN PATSALIDES, MINLABOR SPANOS, MINAGRI COLOTAS. HE ALSO REFERRED TO PRINCIPAL BUSINESS LEADERS AND MEMBERS OF THE CYPRUS ESTABLISHMENT. HE SAID THE OBJECT IS TO PERSUADE FORCES OF THE CENTER AND RIGHT TO WORK TOGETHER UNDER AN ABOVE-PARTY UNIFIER. EITHER PASCALIDES OR PATSALIDES WOULD DO ADMIRABLY. BOTH ARE INTERESTED. CHRISTOPHIDES REFERRED TO A CONVERSATION HE HAD HAD WITH PASCALIDES LATE THE PREVIOUS WEEK. INDICATIVELY, PASCALIDES IS NO LONGER TALKING ABOUT "WHETHER" BUT "HOW." FOR EXAMPLE, PASCALIDES HAD SPOKEN OF THE IMPORTANT ASSET OF SENIOR MINISTERS' WILLINGNESS TO RESIGN IN SECRET

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BLOC AT THE RIGHT TIME AS PUBLIC INDICATION OF LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN KYPRIANOU'S LEADERSHIP.

6. CHRISTOPHIDES NOTED THAT WITH PASCALIDES AND PATSALIDES BOTH ON BOARD, THERE REMAINED THREE KEYS TO FORGING CENTER-RIGHT UNITY: PAPADOPOULOS, CLERIDES AND (COOPERATIVES COMMISSIONER) AZINAS. PAPADOPOULOS SEEMS READY TO GIVE UP HIS IDEA OF CREATING A SEPERATE PARTY TO PROMOTE HIS CANDIDACY AND HAS SAID HE WILL JOIN. CLERIDES IS UNDECIDED. HIS MORALITY, UNSELFISHNESS AND PATRIOTISM INCLINE HIM TO SUBORDINATE HIS OWN AMBITIONS DESPITE THE FACT THAT HE IS CLEARLY THE BEST QUALIFIED TO BE PRESIDENT. HOWEVER, SOME SENIOR MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY (DEMOCRATIC RALLY) ARE INSISTING THAT DR CAN MAKE A BETTER SHOWING NOW THAN IN LAST FALL'S ELECTIONS AND CLERIDES MUST RUN TO PROVE THE POINT EVEN IF HE LOSES. CHRISTOPHIDES SAID CLERIDES MUST BE PERSUADED TO WORK FOR THE COMMON INTEREST. HE NEED NOT GO UNREWARDED. HE WOULD BE A LOGICAL FOREIGN MINISTER.

T7. AZINAS, CHRISTOPHIDES CONTINUED, IS A COMPLETE OPPORTUNIST. HE IS ON RECORD AS SAYING ALL THE RIGHT THINGS ABOUT A PASCALIDES OR PATSALIDES ABOVE-PARTY CANDIDACY BUT IS KNOWN TO HAVE KEPT THE DOOR OPEN WITH KYPRIANOU. IN THE LAST ANALYSIS, HE WILL SWING THE POWER OF THE COOPERATIVE BEHIND WHAT HE DECIDES IS LIKE TO BE THE WINNING FACTION.

8. CHRISTOPHIDES SKETCHED IN SOME OF HIS THINKING ON TACTICS: AVOIDANCE OF PREMATURE EXPOSURE BY EITHER PASCALIDES OR PATSALIDES (WHOM HE DESCRIBED AS COLLEAGUES NOT COMPETITORS, WHO WILL DECIDE JOINTLY ON WHICH ONE SHOULD RUN); NEWSPAPER REVELATIONS IN LATE NOVEMBER DAMAGING TO KYPRIANOU AND CALLING FOR UNITY AGAINST THE SECRET

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COMMUNISTS AND THEIR FACADE; SPECULATION ABOUT THE DESIRABLE UNIFIER; RALLIES; THE CANDIDATE'S AGREEMENT TO HEED THE CALL TO DUTY; ETC. CHRISTOPHIDES FEELS THERE MAY BE MISTAKE IN TRYING TO WEAN LYSSARIDES AND HIS EDEK PARTY AWAY FROM THE AKEL-KYPRIANOU FRONT.

9. I ASKED WHAT ROLE CHRISTOPHIDES AND THOSE OF LIKE MIND SAW FOR GREECE IN THEIR PLANS. CHRISTOPHIDES SAID HE HAD STOPPED IN ATHENS (HE DID NOT SPECIFY WHETHER TO OR FROM NEW YORK) AND TALKED TO (DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER) STAVROPOULOS AND AN OFFICER IN CARAMANLIS' ENTOURAGE. BOTH HAD ACKNOWLEDGED THAT GOG COULD NOT AVOID DISCREET INVOLVEMENT EVEN IF IT WISHED; A COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED GOVERNMENT IN CYPRUS COULD NOT BE ACCEPTED BY GREECE. CHRISTOPHIDES NOTED THAT GREEK AMB DOUNTAS HAS SINCE THANKED HIM FOR HIS REMARKS IN ATHENS, SAYING THAT THESE HAD CREATED SUPPORT FOR HIS OWN VIEWS.

10. CHRISTOPHIDES SAID GREECE NEEDS A LITTLE FRIENDLY URGING TO PUT ITS WEIGHT QUIETLY BEHIND A PASCALIDES OR PATSALIDES SOLUTION. HE URGED A ROLE FOR USG IN THIS SENSE.

11. AT THE CONCLUSION OF OUR CONVERSATION, I ASKED CHRISTOPHIDES IF ALL THIS POLITICAL MANEUVERING DID NOT VALIDATE THE TURKISH THESIS THAT THERE IS NO ONE WITH WHOM TO DO SERIOUS CYPRUS BUSINESS UNTIL AFTER FEBRUARY. HE SAID NOT AT ALL. HE FEELS THE PRESENT SITUATION HAS GIVEN HIM AND OTHER SENIOR MINISTERS MORE AUTHORITY THAN BEFORE. THEY ACT TOGETHER, HAVE AGREED ON PROCEDURE WHEREBY MATTERS FOR DEBATE BY THE COMBINED NATIONAL COUNCIL/COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ARE DISCUSSED BETWEEN THEMSELVES FIRST, AND CAN INFLUENCE KYPRIANOU MORE THAN THEY EVER COULD MAKARIOS. THESE MINISTERS ARE INTERESTED IN ADVANCING THE NEGOTIATION.

12. COMMENT: I AM REPORTING CHRISTOPHIDES' VIEWS IN DETAIL

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AS THEY ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF WHAT IS BEING SAID TO US EVER MORE STRONGLY BY A STEADILY ENLARGING CUTTING EDGE OF RESPONSIBLE GREEK CYPRIOT THINKING. WE HAVE HAD A HALF-DOZEN CONVERSATIONS ON ALMOST IDENTICAL LINES IN THE PAST WEEK OR SO, E.G. PATSALIDES, CBC DIRECTOR ANDREAS COLOCASSIDES, POPULAR BANK PRESIDENT KIKIS LAZARIDES, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE DIRECTOR

MILTIADES CHRISTODOULOU, AGHON EDITOR KOSHIS. THESE AND OTHERS HAVE SOUGHT US OUT WITH VARIANTS OF A COMMON THEME: AKEL HAS A PUPPET IN KYPRIANOU; BEHIND THE FACADE OF LEGITIMACY, RESPECTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY, IT HAS BEGUN TO PURSUE ITS INTERESTS MUCH MORE AGGRESSIVELY THAN IN THE PAST; KYPRIANOU IS NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO CARRY GREEK CYPRIOTS TO A CYPRUS SOLUTION EVEN IF HE WERE INTERESTED; EITHER PASCALIDES OR PATSALIDES CAN PROVIDE THE KIND OF STRONG ALTERNATIVE THAT IS NEEDED FOR REASONS OF BOTH INTERNAL CYPRIOT POLITICS AND COOPERATION WITH THE US IN PURSUIT OF A CYPRUS SOLUTION; US POSITION IS DELICATE BUT ITS SENSITIVE, INDIRECT SUPPORT CAN HELP PRODUCE THE RIGHT RESULT.

13. IN ALL CONVERSATIONS WE HAVE LENT A SYMPATHIC EAR BUT OBSERVED THAT KYPRIANOU IS A MAN WITH WHOM WE THINK WE CAN WORK, SHOULD IT COME TO THAT, AND THE CHOICE IS A CYPRIOT ONE. UNDOUBTEDLY OUR CYPRIOT FRIENDS, CONVINCED AS ALWAYS THAT THEIR DESTINIES ARE MANIPULATED FROM OUTSIDE, REGARD THE LATTER CAVEAT AS PRO-FORMA DIPLOMATIC CAUTION. AND SUCH, IN A WAY, IT IS, SINCE OUR CONSIDERED VIEW IS THAT A PASCALIDES OR PATSALIDES WOULD DO A MUCH BETTER JOB FOR GREEK CYPRIOTS THAN THE PRESENT INCUMBENT, WHO GOT WHERE HE IS ESSENTIALLY BY THE ACCIDENT OF AN UNTIMELY DEATH AND BECAUSE NO ONE TOOK HIM SERIOUSLY AS PRESIDENTIAL MATERIAL.

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Message Attributes

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